

PERRY TOWNSHIP CRITICAL AREA TEXT

Critical Area 1

Location: Bounded by Senate Avenue to the west; Meridian street to the east; and near Epler and Brunswick avenues.

Why critical: The industrial use in this area is incongruous to the residential uses surrounding it on three sides. There are also two parcels of vacant land. These sites should not be developed as industrial uses. By the standards set up by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation, Perry Township is in need of significantly more park acreage and linear park mileage to adequately serve its population.

Recommendations:

- Develop the north portion of vacant land as a park.
- Maintain residential uses surrounding the industrial.
- Prevent any further industrial encroachment into the neighborhood.

Critical Area 2

Location: Near Banta Avenue, Bluff Road and the Indiana Railroad tracks.

Why critical: This area is critical because it sits in the wellhead protection area and is partially in the 100-year floodway. In the far east of the area, there are also heavy commercial uses encroaching into a residential neighborhood. By the standards set up by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation, Perry Township is in need of significantly more park acreage and linear park mileage in order to adequately serve its population.

Recommendations:

- Restrict the development of any uses that might potentially pollute the wellfield such as any heavy commercial or industrial uses;
- The land use recommendation for the privately operated softball complex and gymnastics facility is “Park” because it functions as a privately held recreation area. If the area should become the subject of development, effort should be made to secure it for public park use. If park use is not an option, then it should be developed as Residential Development greater than 3.5 and equal to or less than 5 units per acre, as indicated by the parenthesized index number, with emphasis placed on protecting and preserving the wooded areas and the floodway of Little Buck Creek;
- The area following Little Buck Creek to the north and coming up along Bluff Road should be developed as part of the Indianapolis Greenways network.
- Restrict further commercial encroachment into the neighborhood adjacent to the Indiana Railroad Company tracks.

Critical Area 3

Location: Intersection of Madison Avenue and Thompson Road

Why Critical: The Louisville & Indiana Railroad which parallels Madison Avenue for much of its length is under study as a potential rapid transit corridor linking Greenwood and the southern portions of Marion County with downtown Indianapolis and a region wide rapid transit network. It is possible that Thompson Road, as a major east-west corridor, could be the location of a transit stop or station. Although conjectural at this point, it is critical to consider the land use implications of the potential transit stop or station. Portions of the Critical Area have been designated with the secondary land use recommendation Environmentally Sensitive to call attention to significant tree cover. By the standards set up by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation, Perry Township is in need of significantly more park acreage and linear park mileage to adequately serve the population.

Recommendations:

- If this area should become a rapid transit stop/station, the land use recommendations for the single family homes on the north side of Thompson Road and on both sides of Morgan Drive within the Critical Area shall change to Residential Development greater than 8 and equal to or less than 15 units per acre.
- The wooded area designated as Environmentally Sensitive should be preserved to the extent possible.
- Should the Louisville & Indiana Railroad cease to function as a rail line or rapid transit line, the land use recommendation for the rail corridor shall change to Linear Park for provision of an active greenway trail.

Critical Area 4

Location: Madison Avenue corridor from Huntstead Lane (north of Epler Avenue) to Tulip Drive (north of Southport Road)

Why Critical: With two exceptions Madison Avenue is solidly residential from Stevens Street south to Tulip Drive. This stretch of Madison Avenue runs through the included town of Homeroft. It is distinctive for its frontage streets and large lots with extensive setbacks. It is critical to the residential character of this corridor as well as to the stability of the surrounding neighborhoods that this portion of Madison Avenue remains solidly residential with no commercial encroachments. Only a few residential blocks remain in the stretch of Madison Avenue north from Edgewood Avenue to Thompson Road. Signs of commercial disinvestment in a few of the properties along Madison Avenue to the north of this residential area would suggest that additional commercial expansion in this vicinity is not in the best interests of the long term viability of the area. It is critical to the stability of the surrounding neighborhoods that these areas remain residential or at least residential in terms of scale, mass and intensity of use. Parking and signage should be kept to a minimum. Parking should be well screened from both neighboring residences and the street.

Within the whole of the Critical Area, the area along Epler Avenue between Madison Avenue and the Louisville & Indiana Railroad is a notable sub-area. On the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection of Madison and Epler avenues is an area of heavy commercial uses, some of which are showing signs of disinvestment. Continuing east along Epler Avenue is a series of single family homes. At the railroad tracks, industrial uses are located on both sides of Epler Avenue. The industrial use to the north wraps around the northside of the residential properties. The land use plan recommends industrial use for much of this vicinity.

The Louisville & Indiana Railroad which parallels Madison Avenue for much of its length is under study as a potential rapid transit corridor linking Greenwood and the southern portions of Marion County with Downtown Indianapolis and a region wide rapid transit network. It is possible that Edgewood Avenue, as a major east-west corridor, could be the location of a transit stop or station. Although conjectural at this point, it is critical to consider the land use implications of the potential transit stop or station.

Portions of the Critical Area have been designated with the secondary land use recommendation Environmentally Sensitive to call attention to significant tree cover. By the standards set up by the Indianapolis Department of Parks and Recreation, Perry Township is in need of significantly more park acreage and linear park mileage in order to adequately serve the population.

Recommendations:

- Restrict community commercial development to the immediate corners of the intersection of Edgewood Avenue and Madison Avenue and to the east side of Madison Avenue between Whalen Avenue and Epler Avenue as shown on map. Restrict office commercial development to the west side of Madison Avenue between Dudley Avenue and Whalen Avenue, to the southeast corner of Madison and Whalen avenues and to the parcels immediately adjacent to the retail sites on the east of Madison Avenue at Edgewood Avenue as shown on map. The retail commercial sites on the east side of Madison Avenue at Southview Drive should be redeveloped as office commercial sites. Retail development should not encroach upon areas of existing or planned residential development.
- The expansion of the light industrial recommendation in the area of Madison Avenue and Epler Avenue is meant to encourage an integrated light industrial use. Piecemeal development of any use or expansion of the heavy commercial uses already present in the area is not intended by the light industrial recommendation. Industrial expansion should be well buffered from the existing residential uses.
- The wooded areas designated as Environmentally Sensitive should be preserved to the extent possible.
- Should the Louisville & Indiana Railroad cease to function as a rail line or rapid transit line, the land use recommendation for the rail corridor shall change to Linear Park for provision of an active greenway trail. Also at this time the Special Use designation for the east-west power line that crosses the railroad would also change to Linear Park to provide for neighborhood trail connections to the trail on the rail corridor.
- The park designation for the interior portion of 6100 block of Madison Avenue is intended as a passive, conservation-oriented private or public park. Active recreation uses are not anticipated.

- The residential portion of Madison Avenue through the Town of Homeroft and extending north to the commercial node at Edgewood Avenue should be studied as a possible overlay district to protect the physical character of the area as seen in its older housing.

Critical Area 5

Location: Southport

Why Critical: The City of Southport originally developed as a distinct village on the Madison & Indianapolis Railroad (now the Louisville & Indiana Railroad). Over the years Indianapolis grew out to surround it. To maintain Southport's identity as a distinct place it has been designated as Village Mixed Use. To retain the character of Southport it is critical to protect the current development patterns (mix of land uses; and the size, shape and location of building on their sites.) and to retain and extend pedestrian accessibility. It is critical to preserve the residential area and the historic cemetery. A portion of the historic part of Southport is outside the limits of this plan and within the boundaries of the US 31 and South Madison Avenue Corridor Plan. It is critical to recognize that some of the proposals for this Critical Area have an effect on, and are affected by, those areas west of the railroad and that redevelopment efforts should be well-coordinated. Little Buck Creek flows along the northern portion of this Critical Area. To reduce potential damage, it is critical not to impede flow during periods of flooding.

The Louisville & Indiana Railroad which parallels Madison Avenue for much of its length is under study as a potential rapid transit corridor linking Greenwood and the southern portions of Marion County with Downtown Indianapolis and a region wide rapid transit network. It is possible that Southport Road, as a major east-west corridor, could be the location of a transit stop or station. Although conjectural at this point, it is critical to consider the land use implications of the potential transit stop or station. Portions of the Critical Area have been designated with the secondary land use recommendation Environmentally Sensitive to call attention to significant tree cover, steep slopes and the 100-year floodplain.

Recommendations:

- Development in the immediate vicinity of Southport Road and the Louisville and Indiana Railroad should continue to be a mix of retail, office, civic and residential uses.
- Restrict encroachment of commercial uses in the solidly residential areas of Southport as shown on the Critical Area map.
- Future development within the Critical Area should reflect the existing development patterns such as setbacks, building orientation, rooflines, and other factors.
- Pedestrian connectivity should be maintained and strengthened throughout the Critical Area by the construction of sidewalks, paths and safe street crossings.
- If this area should become a rapid transit stop/station or should the Louisville & Indiana Railroad become a greenway, the land use recommendations for the heavy commercial area west of the railroad tracks shall change to Residential Development greater than 8 and equal to or less than 15 units per acre. Like the existing development on the property, new higher-density housing should be accessed from Madison Avenue and not from Tulip Drive or

Homestead Drive. The new development should also be well buffered. There should be a pedestrian connection from this site to the transit stop or greenway.

- Should the Louisville & Indiana Railroad cease to function as a rail line or rapid transit line, the land use recommendation for the rail corridor shall change to Linear Park for provision of an active greenway trail.
- If this area should become a rapid transit stop/station, the land use recommendations for the first lot north of Little Buck Creek east of the railroad tracks shall change to Residential Development greater than 3.5 and equal to or less than 5 units per acre, although no development should take place within the floodway of Little Buck Creek.
- If this area should become a rapid transit stop/station, a greenway connection to the stop should be developed utilizing Little Buck Creek.
- The wooded area designated as Environmentally Sensitive should be preserved to the extent possible.
- The steep slopes designated as Environmentally Sensitive should be disturbed as little as possible to help prevent soil erosion.
- Maintain and enhance the dense vegetative cover along Little Buck Creek. Cooling of stream water helps maintain good water quality.

Critical Area 6

Location: Main Street, Beech Grove

Why Critical: The Town of Beech Grove originally developed as a distinct village. The New York Central railroad locomotive shops were a crucial influence on subsequent platting of streets, business and residential areas. Many commercial and residential structures in Beech Grove have been placed on the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory by the Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana. Over the years, Indianapolis has grown out to meet Beech Grove. To maintain Beech Grove's identity as a distinct place, Main Street and portions of First and Emerson Avenues have been designated as Village Mixed Use. To retain the small town character of Beech Grove, it is critical to protect the current development patterns (mix of land uses; and the size, shape and location of buildings on their sites). It is also critical to preserve the residential areas of Beech Grove.

Recommendations:

- Development along Main Street should continue to be a mix of retail, office, church, civic and residential uses.
- Restrict encroachment of commercial uses into the solidly residential areas of Beech Grove as shown on Critical Area map.
- Future development within the Critical Area should reflect the existing pattern of buildings. New development should reflect the existing patterns of building height, and architecture. New buildings should be built up to the right-of-way line and have the look and feel of the existing structures with storefronts facing Main Street.

Critical Area 7

Location: Emerson Avenue from I-465 East to Southport Road

Why Critical: To protect the residential areas along Emerson Avenue, ease traffic flow and avoid piecemeal commercial development, it is critical that commercial development not encroach on the residential portions of Emerson Avenue. The major intersections of Emerson Avenue and Thompson Road, and Emerson and Edgewood Avenues have been designated as office and commercial nodes. It is critical that these areas are developed in a manner that is sensitive to the surrounding residential areas. It is also critical that areas designated as floodway are protected from development that would be detrimental to these natural features. This portion of Emerson Avenue is bounded on the north and south by two major interstate intersections. These two interchanges will result in increasing traffic for Emerson Avenue and in turn will bring increased pressure for commercial development all along the corridor. Plans to widen Emerson Avenue in this area will add additional pressure for commercial development. Future commercial development should take advantage of the Beech Grove TIF district located near the intersection of Emerson Avenue and I 465.

Recommendations:

- Restrict commercial development to the areas shown on the map.
- Commercial development, both retail and office, on the corners of Emerson and Edgewood Avenues should be integrated, well buffered from the neighboring residences, have access only onto Emerson and Edgewood Avenues, provide sidewalks along Emerson Avenue, use only low level signage, and shield lighting to avoid spillage onto neighboring properties.
- Areas of residential development along both sides of Emerson Avenue should remain residential.
- Commercial development should not be allowed to encroach into existing residential areas.
- Areas designated as floodway should be protected from development that would be environmentally detrimental.

Critical Area 8

Location: Southeast of State Road 37 and Edgewood Avenue

Why Critical: The boundaries of this Critical Area include substantial undeveloped or agricultural acreage lying just inside the one-year time of travel from public water wells. While heavy commercial and light industrial uses have previously been allowed south of Edgewood Avenue along Harding Street's west side, it is critical to halt this progression because of intrusion into the one-year time of travel. Likewise, vulnerable land use in the northern portion of the Critical Area may be subject to industrial development pressure for establishment of uses similar to those located across Edgewood Avenue to the north.

Perry Township's current parkland ratio of 2.8 acres per 1000 persons falls far short of the desired 17.3 acres per person set out in the Community Values Component of this Comprehensive Plan update. This Critical Area is designated not only because establishment of park area would provide a "hard stop" to southern industrial progression, but also because of conditions favorable to creation of parkland. The area features easy access, larger parcel sizes, a combination of natural areas and open space suitable for playing fields, and service to a larger

number of currently unserved people, based on a typical one-mile service radius from the proposed parkland. Should it not be possible to retain most of the Critical Area as parkland, development should be restricted to low-density residential uses.

This Critical Area includes an historic structure, the Isaac Sutton House at 1846 West Banta Road. Whether or not the structure continues to be utilized as a residence, or is converted to another use at some point in the future, it is important to preserve it, along with its surrounding natural woodland.

Virtually the entire Critical Area lies within a floodplain, and a wetland is located in the northwestern corner. Both factors impose development constraints.

Recommendations:

- Restrict establishment of new industrial and heavier commercial uses in wellfield protection areas south of Edgewood Avenue.
- Aggressively pursue establishment of new park area on undeveloped land within this Critical Area.
- Recognize the historic value of the Isaac Sutton House when considering development on that parcel or adjacent parcels.
- Recognize the impact of allowing development in the floodplain. Any proposed development in floodplain areas should meet the requirements of the 100-year flood protection regulations, including the Flood Control Districts Zoning Ordinance.
- Ensure that zoning classifications for parcels within this Critical Area (and for all parcels within wellfield districts) allow only for relatively low-intensity uses such as park, low-density residential, and office. Development on sandy soils should not be permitted, due to rapid percolation of contaminants to the aquifer and the relatively high degree of pollution potential.

Critical Area 9

Location: South and east of Sunshine Gardens

Why Critical: Future use of currently-mined property in this Critical Area has potential to adversely impact residential property in the Sunshine Gardens area. While the length of time of mining operations varies greatly and is typically substantial, it is important to ensure that the use of land following the end of mining operations is compatible with adjacent land use. Some mining operations, such as those for limestone, peat, and gypsum, have little State regulation. Without local regulation for reclamation after mining's end, the state of the former mined land and the limited possibilities for its re-use because of lack of restoration may have adverse safety and economic impacts on nearby residential land use.

Much of the land in this Critical Area lies within an established wellfield. It is important to ensure that the recommended land uses and the zoning classification for currently- and potentially-mined properties do not allow a wide range of potentially adverse uses.

In the western portion of the Critical Area, there exist opportunities for expansion of a greenway system along the western edge of the mined parcel adjacent to the White River. Given relatively favorable circumstances for re-use of mined properties as park areas, investigation into such a possibility should be a priority. In addition, a large area in the southwestern portion of the Critical Area is desired as parkland by the Indianapolis Department of Parks & Recreation and is so recommended.

Virtually the entire Critical Area lies within a floodplain, and wetland is located in various places throughout. Both factors impose development constraints.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that zoning classifications for parcels within this Critical Area (and for all parcels within wellfield districts) allow only for relatively low-intensity uses such as park, low-density residential, and office.
- Require development plans for proposed development on parcels overlying the aquifer to show plans of operation which recognize and protect the aquifer, including guidelines for groundwater contamination protection, abatement, and soil structure restoration.
- Explore opportunities for expansion of a greenway along the White River as a successor land use to current mining activities. Pursue establishment of additional park acreage in the southwestern portion of the Critical Area to connect existing and planned trail systems along White River and to the east following Little Buck Creek.
- Recognize the impact of allowing development in the floodplain. Any proposed development in floodplain areas should meet the requirements of the 100-year flood protection regulations, including the Flood Control Districts Zoning Ordinance.

Critical Area 10

Location: Glenn's Valley

Why critical: This area has been designated as Village Mixed Use. Founded in the 1820s by Archibald Glenn, the original village was located where Bluff Road crossed Pleasant Run Creek. As much of the rest of southern Perry Township has taken on modern suburban character, Glenn's Valley has retained an appearance of a small village. Although the state highway designation has shifted from Bluff Road to the modern State Road 37 corridor, traffic volumes are significant on Bluff Road and Morgantown Road. A mixture of land uses and a largely vacant parcel offer a foundation to strengthen the village qualities.

Recommendations:

- A six-acre tract on the south end of the critical area is recommended for residential development of 3.5 to 5 units per acre. The site development plan should approximate the setbacks for existing structures to the north and limit parking in front of buildings. Include pedestrian and bicycle access from Bluff Road to Morgantown Road to Glenn's Valley School and Glenn's Valley Park within this southern tract.

- Infill structures should respect the architectural styles that are dominant in this village in terms of size, massing, site placement and rooflines.
- Confine community commercial land uses to the northern part of the critical area and to extend no farther southward than the parcels of 8319 South Bluff Road and 8268 Morgantown Road.
- Commercial uses in the northern section should be limited to community commercial and office commercial land uses. Land uses that require large new structures and extensive parking lots should be discouraged.
- As improvements are planned to the public streets, these plans should include sidewalks and amenities such as tree plantings and related amenities. Where possible, marked crosswalks should be established for safer pedestrian crossings of Bluff Road and Morgantown Road.

Critical Area 11

Location: Lake Road vicinity

Why Critical: Mining activities characterize much of this Critical Area. Future use of currently-mined property has potential to adversely impact residential property in the area. While the length of time of mining operations varies greatly and is typically substantial, it is important to ensure that the use of land following the end of mining operations is compatible with adjacent land use. Some mining operations, such as those for limestone, peat, and gypsum, have little State regulation. Without local regulation for reclamation after mining's end, the state of the former mined land and the limited possibilities for its re-use because of lack of restoration may have adverse safety and economic impacts on nearby residential land use.

Natural wetland area is interspersed throughout this Critical Area. In addition, new park area is proposed adjacent to White River and extending east to meet the Southern Dunes development, encompassing environmentally sensitive woodlands. It is critical to ensure, for future viability of the wetland and possible park land, that activities such as illegal dumping, or filling with materials not considered "clean," are prevented. Should it not be possible to retain most of the Critical Area as parkland, development should be restricted to low-density residential uses.

Much of the land in this Critical Area lies within an established wellfield. It is important to ensure that the recommended land uses and the zoning classification for currently mined properties do not allow a wide range of potentially adverse uses. In addition, the entire Critical Area lies within a floodplain, imposing further development constraints.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that zoning classifications for parcels within this Critical Area (and for all parcels within wellfield districts) allow only for relatively low-intensity uses such as park, low-density residential, and office. Development on sandy soils should not be permitted, due to rapid percolation of contaminants to the aquifer and the relatively high degree of pollution potential.

- Require development plans for proposed development on parcels overlying the aquifer to show plans of operation which recognize and protect the aquifer, including guidelines for groundwater contamination protection, abatement, and soil structure restoration.
- Coordinate with State agencies to continue or increase monitoring and enforcement activities in order to prevent illegal dumping and filling activity.
- Recognize the impact of allowing development in the floodplain. Any proposed development in floodplain areas should meet the requirements of the 100-year flood protection regulations, including the Flood Control Districts Zoning Ordinance.
- Pursue establishment of parkland on designated tracts within this Critical Area, taking advantage of opportunities to preserve wetland and woodland, and allowing linkage of the White River greenway with residential development to the east.